

# Conversations between a Mother with Dementia and her Daughter: A speech act of ‘thanking’, Grice’s Maxim of Quality, and Politeness

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## Abstract:

In 田中 (Tanaka) (2013) (2014) (2015) (2017), I used telephone conversations between a mother and her daughter (myself), and examined how the aging of the mother affects their communication. Considering the rapid aging of Japanese society, these papers were targeted at Japanese readers and were written in Japanese.

Now, I would like to share the results of my research with people in broader area, and I re-write the main parts in English with some cultural explanation. First, I consider how aging can change their social roles in communication. Then, focusing on a speech act of ‘thanking’, I examine how the change of the roles may affect the speech act. Further, I consider how dementia may be related to Grice’s Maxim of Quality and Politeness. These results suggest that people with dementia are asking for a relationship with others in their own way.

**key words:** dementia, thanking, Maxim of Quality, Politeness

## 認知症を持つ母と娘の会話

### —「感謝」という発話行為、グライスの質の行動指針、ポライトネス—

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## 要旨

筆者は、田中 (2013) (2014) (2015) (2017) において、認知症を患っていた亡き母との電話での会話を主なデータとし、母の老化による関係性の変化と認知的な障害がコミュニケーションに及ぼす影響を見てきた。日本の高齢化を見据え、日本人の読者を想定してこれらは日本語で執筆した。

しかし、その内容を海外の介護者や研究者とも共有したいと思い、これまでの研究の主要部分をまとめ、文化的な説明も加えて英語で書き直すことにした。まず、Tanaka (2001) で提案した枠組みを用いて関係性の変化を考察し、「介護者」「被介護者」という新たな役割が「感謝表現」の使用に与える影響を見る。さらに、平常ではやりとりの前提となる「グライスの質の行動指針」や「ポライトネス」に認知症が及ぼす影響を考える。そこには、認知症を持つ人が、コミュニケーションにおける問題を抱えながらも、独自の仕方では他者との関係を希求する姿があるように感じられる。

## INTRODUCTION

This paper considers how dementia affects communication. First, we see what kind of roles we may have in our society and how they may change as time goes by. Focusing on the telephone conversations between a mother and her daughter, I examine how their interaction was affected by dementia the mother suffered from. We will see the data from three pragmatic aspects: a speech act of ‘thanking’, Grice’s Maxim of Quality, and Politeness.

## 1. ROLES IN INTERACTION

### 1.1 Basic Frame

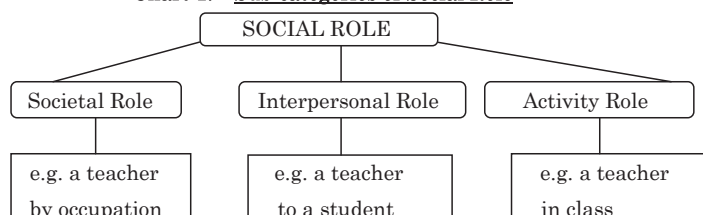
Based on Thomas (1986), Tanaka (2001) proposed basic three roles to analyze interactions: ‘societal role’ ‘interpersonal role’<sup>1</sup> and ‘activity role’. Each role is defined as follows:

*Societal role*: a role which the individual occupies in society, regardless of the relationship with another interactant in the current interaction. (For example, if a person is a teacher by occupation, s/he may be regarded as a ‘teacher’ by another interactant, even when the interactant is not her/his student.)

*Interpersonal role*: the personal relationship obtaining between one interactant and another. (Unlike *societal role*, *interpersonal role* is based on the actual relationship between the interactants: e.g. teacher–student, friend– friend.)

*activity role*: the relationship obtaining between one interactant and another in that particular *activity type* (See Levinson 1979) where the interaction occurs. (For example, in class, a teacher plays the activity role of ‘teacher’, and the role affects her/his linguistic behaviours.)

Chart 1. Sub-categories of Social Role



(ref.: Tanaka 2001: 70-74)

1 I first termed it ‘Personal Relationship Role’ in Tanaka (2001). Referring to it, Thomas (2001) changed the term into ‘Interpersonal Role’. I adopted her term thereafter.

## 1.2. Application of the Frame to Data

As my mother was getting older and needed some support, I had a telephone conversation with her almost every day for about ten years. Since I got her permission<sup>2</sup> for recording for my research, I used our conversations as the data for analysis.

Tanaka (2005) (2006) applied the role categorization to the telephone conversation, and further proposed the concept of *role focus*, which is defined as ‘the focused aspect of the role in a certain stage of the discourse’; for example, a *working* daughter is focused at one stage of their interaction, and an *elderly* mother is highlighted at another stage. Tanaka also proposed *speech act role* as sub-categories of activity role, which indicates ‘the role each interactant plays in a certain speech act’; for example, when one thanks the other person, s/he is ‘thanks giver’ and the other person is ‘thanks receiver’.

The roles discussed in Tanaka (2005) (2006) are summarized in the table below. At that time, M was 73 years old, but she was still fine and often supports D with her knowledge and experience. They are both supporters to each other, and either can be a thanks giver or receiver according to the situation. Each role is not fixed either.

**Table 1. Roles of the Interactants in 2004**

	SOCIAL ROLE				
	SOCIETAL ROLE	INTERPERSONAL ROLE		ACTIVITY ROLE	
		Role Focus	Main Role	Main Role	Speech Act Role
M age:73	Homemaker	elderly	Mother	Supporter	thanks giver
D age: 50	Teacher	working	Daughter		thanks receiver

M: mother / D: daughter

(revised from Tanaka 2006:126)

## 1.3. Changing of the Roles

However, these roles had to change. In her 80s, M often forgot things. Worried about her, D moved to a flat, which was located one-minute walk from M’s house. Despite their efforts to keep the same relationship as above, their actual roles tended to be in Table 2 as below.

2 It was an oral permission I got in June 2003, and I got her written permission in August 2008.

Table 2. Roles of the Interactants in 2011

	SOCIAL ROLE				
	SOCIETAL ROLE	INTERPERSONAL ROLE		ACTIVITY ROLE	
		Role Focus	Main Role	Main Role	Speech Act Role
M <u>age: 80</u>	Homemaker	elderly <u>with dementia</u>	Mother	<u>support</u> <u>receiver</u>	<u>thanks</u> <u>giver</u>
D <u>age: 57</u>	Teacher	working	Daughter	<u>support</u> <u>giver</u>	<u>thanks</u> <u>receiver</u>

M: mother / D: daughter

(Revised from Tanaka 2013: 98)

Kitwood (1997) mentions that ‘Our frame of reference should no longer be person-with DEMENTIA, but PERSON-with dementia.’ (p.7). I could not agree with him more, but it was not easy for me to realize the concept in everyday lives. Although M’s condition at that time was not very serious, ‘person-with DEMENTIA’ was often highlighted.

## 2. A SPEECH ACT OF ‘THANKING’

Changing of the roles may affect how and what we talk to each other in various ways. In other words, the way how we talk to each other may reveal what kind of roles and relationships we have with the other person. As an example, I would like to focus on a speech act of ‘thanking’, and to consider what relationship is revealed from this speech act in my data.

Following Searle’s classification of ‘illocutionary acts’ (Searle 1979 [1975]) , Leech (1983) categorizes ‘thanking’ into EXPRESSIVE, and mentions as follows:

EXPRESSIVES have the function of expressing, or making known, the speaker’s psychological attitude towards a state of affairs which the illocution presupposes; eg thanking, congratulating, pardoning, blaming, praising, condoling, etc. Like the commissives, they tend to be *convivial*, and therefore *intrinsically polite*.

(Leech 1983: 106 my underlining)

As Leech (1983) mentions above, expressing ‘thanking’ is usually considered a *convivial* and polite act. We should note, however, the speech act makes it clear that the speaker owes the other person a debt of gratitude; in a sense, they are in a power relationship, a

giver and a receiver. This relationship may be highlighted particularly in care-giving/receiving situations. I will focus on this speech act and examine the actual data.

## 2.1 Data

The data for analysis are telephone conversations between a mother and her daughter, which are shown in Table 3 below.

**Table 3. Data**

<b>Recording period</b>		1 Oct. ~ 31 December 2011 As only home telephone conversations were recorded and some were deleted for ethical reasons, recording dates were: 27 days in October, 26 days in November, and 26 days in December.
<b>Medium</b>		telephone
<b>Participants</b>	M: Mother	80~81years old (her birthday was in the period)
	D: Daughter	57 years old

## 2.2 Results and Discussion

In the data, five Japanese thanking expressions, ‘(doomo)<sup>3</sup> arigatoo-gozaimeshita’ ‘arigatoo-gozaimasu’ ‘kansha-shitemasu’ ‘(doomo)arigatoo(ne)<sup>4</sup>’ ‘arigatai(wa)’ were focused. These expressions are chosen because they are more formulaic in Japanese thanking and closer to *primary performatives* (Levinson 1983) than some other expressions (e.g. ‘goshinsetsuni’: you are kind) which could be considered thanking expressions. The use of these expressions is analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively.

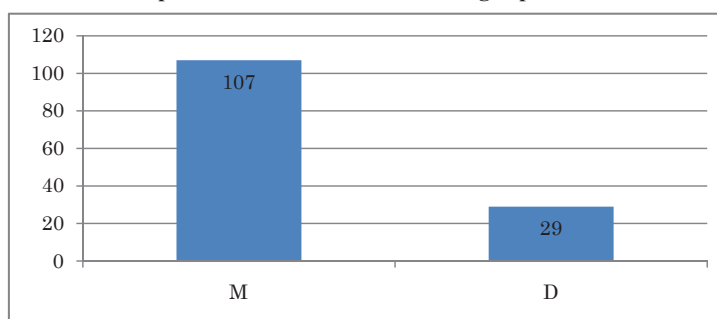
### 2.2.1 Quantitative analysis

Graph 1 shows how many times each participant used the thanking expressions discussed above. M’s use is about 3.7 times as many as D’s use. This difference may be explained by their roles; that is, D gives some support as a care-giver and M thanks for it as a care-receiver.

3 ‘doomo’ is a Japanese adverb, which is added to some thanking expressions in the data and intensifies the meaning like ‘really’ in English.

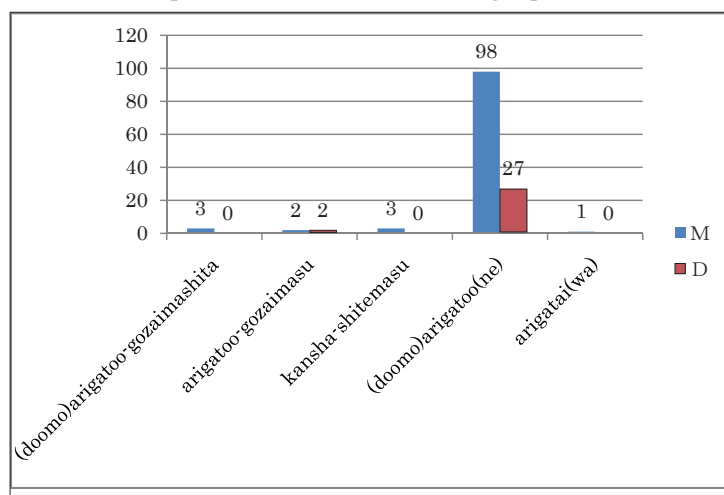
4 ‘ne’ and ‘wa’ are Japanese sentence-ending particles, which are added to some expressions in the data and soften the utterance.

**Graph 1. Total number of thanking expressions**



Graph 2 further shows how many times each participant used each thanking expression. Both M and D mainly used a relatively casual expression, ‘arigatoo’; in the use, M added an intensifier ‘doomo’ 69 times while D did so only 5 times. That is, M used more and politer thanking expressions than D. These results may reflect their generation (M is in her early 80s, while D is in her late 50s), but their roles of ‘care-giver and care-receiver’ are also considered a factor of the results.

**Graph 2. Number of each thanking expression**



### 2.2.2 Qualitative analysis

Let us see the data from a qualitative point of view. Many of the thanking expressions are uttered by M when she responds to D’s consideration. For example, in the following interaction, D (6850)<sup>5</sup> is concerned about M’s health and M (6851) thanks for that. In the

5 The numbers are in sequence, which begin from 1 September, 2011.

next discourse, referring to some fires, D (9856) expresses her concern and M (9857) expresses thanking.

6850 D じゃあほんとに風邪ひかないように  
jaa honto ni kaze hikanaiyooni  
(Then, don't catch a cold.)

6851 M いつもいつもありがとう  
itsumo itsumo arigatoo  
(Thank you as always.)

(12 November, 2011)

9848 D はいじゃあね、なんか火事の事件なんかも結構あるから  
haai jaane, nanka kaji no jiken nanka mo kekkoo aru kara  
(Well then, as there are frequent fires these days.)

9854 D そうだよ  
soo da yo ne  
(Yes, there are.)

(・・・)<sup>6</sup>

9856 D 気をつけて  
kiotsukete  
(Be careful.)

9857 M はいどうもありがとういつも  
hai doomo arigatoo itsumo  
(I will. Thank you very much as always.)

(17 December, 2011)

M also expresses thanking for D's offer. In the next example, D invites M for dinner and M thanks for the invitation. It should be noted that M sometimes tries to change her speech act role of a 'thanks giver'. In the following discourse, M (4959) offers to give D some ginkgo nuts which she gathered in the park. In Japan, ginkgo nuts are considered a seasonal special flavor in autumn and the cooked seeds (called 'ginnan') are added to some traditional Japanese cuisine. In the season, M made it a custom to gather some ginkgo nuts in a park nearby and used them for cooking.

To M's offer, however, D (4962) was rather reluctant to accept it, saying 'But I don't know how to cook.'. After some interactions, reacting to M's modest offer 'Only a little'

6 (・・・) indicates some deletion. Other transcription conventions are at the end.

(4975), D finally accepted it, saying ‘OK, I’ll have only a little.’(4976). Then, D (4978) thanks for M’s offer.

- 4872 D 今日はあの一、うちに夕飯に来てくださいね  
kyoo wa anoo, uchi ni yuuhan ni kite kudasai ne  
(Uh, come and have dinner in my place today.)
- 4873 M ああどうもありがとう  
aa doomo arigatoo  
(Uh thank you very much.)
- ( . . . )
- 4959 M 銀杏の実を少し拾ってきたから持ってこうか  
ginnan no mi o sukoshi hirotte kitakara mottekoo ka  
(As I’ve got ginkgo nuts [in the park] ,  
shall I give you some?)
- 4960 D あそう？  
a soo?  
(Oh, have you?)
- 4961 M うん  
un  
(Yes.)
- 4962 D でも私やり方わかんないなあ  
demo atashi yarikata wakannai naa  
(But I don’t know how to cook.)  
( . . . )
- 4975 M すこーし  
sukooshi  
(Only a little.)
- 4976 D うん、じゃあ少し [いただきます]  
un, jaa sukoshi [itadakimasu]  
(OK, I’ll have only a little.)
- 4977 M [ うん ]  
[un]  
(OK.)
- 4978 D ありがとう  
arigatoo  
(Thank you.)

(21 October, 2011)



On another occasion, M (6895) also offers to buy something for D, who has a cold and stays in bed. D declines the offer, saying ‘No, I don’t need any’ (6896) and gives the reason ‘Well, I’ve got plenty of things [to eat] .) (6900). Then, D expresses thanks for M’s consideration and M accepts it.: ‘Well then, thank you very much indeed.’ (6918), ‘Not at all’ (6919).

- 6895 M    なんか買ってくる？  
nanka katteku?  
(Shall I buy something for you?)
- 6896 D    いや全然いい  
iya zenzen ii  
(No, I don’t need any.)
- 6897 M    あそう？  
a soo?  
(Oh, don’t you?)
- 6898 D    うんうん  
un un  
(No no.)
- 6899 M    [ うん ]  
[un]  
(I see.)
- 6900 D    [ あの ] いろいろあるから  
[ano] iroiro arukara  
(Well, I’ve got plenty of things [to eat] .)  
( . . . )
- 6918 D    うーん、じゃあほんとどうもありがとう  
uun, jaa honto doomo arigatoo  
(Well then, thank you very much indeed.)
- 6919 M    いいえ  
iie  
(Not at all.)

(14, November, 2011)

Through these interactions, we can see that M tries to support D whenever possible, but her trials are not always successful. As a result, M’s main activity role remains a ‘support receiver’ and her speech act role does a ‘thanks giver’.

### 3. MAXIM OF QUALITY

This section focuses on another pragmatic aspect, Grice's Maxim of Quality, which is likely to cause communication problems to people with dementia and their carers. First, let us review 'Cooperative Principle', which Grice (1975) formulates as follows:

We might then formulate a rough general principle which participants will be expected (*ceteris paribus*) to observe, namely: Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged. One might label this the COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE.

(Grice 1975: 45)

Under the Cooperative Principle, Grice (1975: 45-46) proposed four Maxims: Maxim of Quantity ('as informative as is required'), Maxim of Quality ('Try to make your contribution one that is true'), Maxim of Relation ('Be relevant') and Maxim of Manner ('Be perspicuous').

As '*ceteris paribus*' (Grice 1975: 45) indicates, Grice considers the Cooperative Principle 'with other conditions remaining the same'. In other words, with some special conditions, the principle and the maxims may not be observed. In many cases, we deliberately disobey a maxim to create a certain implicature, which Grice (1975) calls 'flouting'. Yet, this is not always the case. Thomas (1995) points out other situations in which we fail to obey a maxim:

A speaker who, with no intention of generating an implicature and with no intention of deceiving, fails to observe a maxim is said to 'infringe' the maxim. In other words, the non-observance stems from imperfect linguistic performance rather than from any desire on the part of the speakers to generate a conversational implicature. This type of non-observance could occur because the speaker has an imperfect command of the language (a young child or a foreign learner), because the speaker's performance is impaired in some way (nervousness, drunkenness, excitement), because of some cognitive impairment, ( . . . )

(Thomas 1995: 74 my underlining)

The non-observance by people with dementia is the case of 'some cognitive impairment' mentioned above. They have no intention of deceiving anyone, but simply fail to observe a maxim. However, the other person, who is not used to this type of non-observance, tends

to be perplexed or even irritated in communication with them.

I was not an exception. What my mother said often confused me, especially when she infringed Maxim of Quality. Let us see the maxim again in detail:

### Maxim of Quality

‘Try to make your contribution one that is true’ – and two more specific maxims:

1. Do not say what you believe to be false.
2. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

(Grice 1975: 45)

## 3.1 Data

The data for analysis are telephone conversations between the same participants as discussed in 2, but the recording period is different: 56 days from 1 January to 31 March 2012, which are shown in Table 4 below.

**Table 4. Data**

<b>Recording period</b>		1 Jan. ~ 31 March 2012 Recording dates were: 20 days in January, 18 days in February, and 18 days in March.
<b>Medium</b>		telephone
<b>Participants</b>	M: Mother	81years old
	D: Daughter	57~58 years old (her birthday was in the period)

## 3.2 Results and Discussion

In the data above, I focus on some interactions which are related to fringing of Maxim of Quality. In other words, M’s utterance does not seem to be true from D’s point of view. From M’s point of view, however, the things may be different.

### 3.2.1 Delusion

At the beginning of 2012, M sometimes seemed to be under a delusion. In the following discourse, M is worried that D has got cancer. Yet, D has no idea what made M believe such a thing. At the end, M was persuaded that it might be her dream.

11253     D    (・・・)でおかあさん2回も電話してきて私が癌になったとかなんとか  
                   (・・・) de okaasan nikai mo dennwa shite-kite watashi ga gan  
                   ni natta toka nantoka  
                   ((・・・)) and you rung me even twice and told me something

- like I have got cancer.)
- 11254 M うんまたなんか (2s) もうしょうがないとかって言ってきて  
un mata nanka (2s) moo shooganai tokatte ittekite  
(Yes, you came and told me something like you couldn't do anything now.)
- ( . . . )
- 11262 M [もうなんか眠れなかった] 一晩中  
[moo nanka nemurenakatta] hitobanjuu  
(I couldn't have slept all night.)
- 11263 D うーんそんなこと言われてもねえ (笑) 私一言もそんなこと言った覚えもないし  
uun sonna koto iwaretemo nee (laugh) watashi hitokoto mo sonna koto itta oboe mo naishi  
(Well, I couldn't help it (laugh) cause I've never told you such a thing...)
- 11264 M (笑) じゃ夢だね  
(laugh) ja yume dane  
((laugh) Well, it was my dream, then.)

(9 January, 2012)

### 3.2.2 Delusion or Reality

Sometimes it was not clear to D whether M's utterance was based on a delusion or a reality. In the following discourse, M claims that someone came to clean her house by D's request. Yet, D doesn't have any idea of such a request. Seeing the interactions in detail, we notice that M explains the cleaning staff were 'two people' (12363) first and later 'one person' (12495). As M was sometimes under a delusion at that time, D was listening to M's story half in doubt. However, if it was true, M might have fallen a victim to a kind of fraud. D was uncertain whether she should take action against it or not. Her doubt was never cleared.

- 12353 M あの在宅の娘さんから  
ano otaku no musume-san kara  
(Your daughter requested us)
- 12354 D うん  
un  
(um)
- 12355 M 頼まれたから来たって言うから

- tanomareta kara kitatte iu kara  
(to come, they said, so I...)
- 12356 D 頼んでないよそれ [詐欺かもしれない]  
tanonde nai yo sore [sagi kamo shinnai]  
(I didn't ask it. It might be a fraud.)  
(...)
- 12363 M 2人でね  
futari de ne  
(Two people, you know.)
- 12364 D あそうなの?  
a soo nano?  
(Were they?)
- 12365 M お掃除 (笑) やりますなんて言ってねえ、せっかく来たからねえまあやっ  
てもらったけども今日だけでいいですって言った  
osooji (laugh) yarimasu nante ittenee, sekkaku kita kara nee  
maa yattemoratta kedomo kyoo dake de iidesutte itta  
(They told me that they clean the house (laugh) As they came  
all the way, I let them do it. But I told them to do it only  
today.)  
(...)
- 12494 D [何人] 何人来たの?  
[nannin] nannin kita no?  
(How many, how many people came?)
- 12495 M 1人  
hitori  
(One person.)

(23 January, 2012)

As we tend to think that people with dementia often talk something unreal, we may take their words untrue even when they are true. 竹中 (Takenaka) (2010) gives an example:

「一緒に暮らしているのは誰か」と問われると「お母さん、お姉ちゃん」と答えて子供時代に逆行したとみなされることがあるが、嫁、孫娘の生活場面での呼称ということも念頭におく。

(Asked whom they live with, they may answer 'Mother and Elder sister'. This answer may be regarded as the retrogression to their childhood. Yet, we should consider that the answer may come from the address terms they use to their daughter-in-law and

their grand-daughter, not from their retrogression.)

(竹中 2010: 68 English translation is mine.)

As Suzuki (1984: 149) points out, in a Japanese family, family members often use the address terms which the youngest member uses. That is, elder members may call their daughter (or daughter-in-law) ‘mother’ as their grand-child calls her so.

### 3.2.3 Confusion

In September 2011, D moved closer to M. Since then, when it was possible, D cooked for M and had a dinner together. First, M was very happy about the invitation, but in 2012 she sometimes got confused about the date.

In the following discourse, M is angry, saying D forgot to have a dinner together. As counter-evidence, D lets M listen to their recorded conversation in the morning. (As mentioned in 1.2, D recorded their conversation with M’s permission.) In the conversation, D told M that she would go to work, which means they could not have a dinner together in the evening. Such clear evidence, from D’s point of view, does not change M’s view: D forgot telling her to have a dinner together (11441) (11455).

- 11440 D 私ほんとにね言っていないよー  
watashi hontoni ne ittenai yoo  
(I really didn’t tell you so.)
- 11441 M いやあねえ、忘れちゃってんだよそいじゃ  
iyaa nee, wasurechattenda yo soi ja  
(Oh dear! You’ve forgotten it then.)
- 11442 D じゃだってねえ私朝のおかあさんとの会話さあテープにとってあるんだあそれ聞いてみる？  
ja datte nee watashi asa no okaasan to no kaiwa saa teepu ni totte aru-n-daa sore kiite miru?  
(Well, but I’ve recorded the conversation with you in the morning. Would you like to listen to it?)  
(・・・) 【電話でその録音部分を流す】  
(D plays the recorded conversation)
- 11450 D 聞いた？  
kiita?  
(Did you listen to it?)
- 11451 M (1s) なんか遠くに聞こえたけどはっきり聞こえなかったけど  
(1s) nanka tooku ni kikoeta kedo hakkiri kikoenakatta kedo

- ((1s) I heard it from far away, and it wasn't clear.
- 11452 D うん、でも今行ってきまーすって私言ったの聞こえたでしょう？  
 un, demo ima ittekimaasu tte watashi ittano kikoeta deshoo?  
 (Well, but you heard me saying 'I'm off now', didn't you?)  
 ( . . . )
- 11455 M (2s) **じゃああんた覚えてないんだ**待っててね待っててねなんにもしないで待っててねって  
 (2s) **jaa anta oboete nainda** mattete ne mattete ne nannimo shinai de mattete nette  
 ((2s) **Then, you don't remember.** [You told me] just to wait without doing anything.

(in the evening: 11 January, 2012)

井出ほか (Ide et al.) (2011) points out that carers try to persuade people with dementia by showing a 'fact', which may even create more problems. For example, we may show her a used plate to our mother, who insists that she has not eaten yet.

お母さんは確かにご飯を食べました。それは私たちにとっては事実です。しかし、認知症であるお母さんの文脈では、まだご飯を食べていないのです。それを私たちの事実で説得しようとしても、納得できなければかえって混乱し、憤ることがあります。(中略) 事実で説得しないことを意識してかかわっている先には、必ず彼らが納得できるかわり方があります。そこにしか答えはないのです。

(Your mother certainly had a meal. That is your fact. But in your mother's context, she has not eaten yet. If you try to persuade her by 'your fact', she may be confused or angry with you. (...) If you try not to persuade them by your fact, you will find another way to interact with them. There are no other ways.)

(井出ほか 2011: 56 English translation is mine.)

### 3.2.4 Confabulation

People with dementia do not seem to believe 'their fact' all the time. They are sometimes uncertain about what is happening. In communicating with others, they often make much effort and feel great stress. Bryden (2012), who suffers from dementia herself, states her own experience:

Without a huge effort, I make slip-ups all the time, but 'normal' people, don't need this amount of effort just to keep on track.

I'm OK as long as I am really trying hard, I am well rested and not at all tired. Then I could almost pass for normal. But inside me, it feels as if I am clinging to a precipice by my fingernails.

(Bryden 2012: 70)

Under great stress, they may sometimes *confabulate* or make a story to fit the 'fact' and to defend themselves. 佐藤 (Sato) (2012) explains about confabulation as follows:

作話は意図せずについてしまう嘘であり、本人にとっては事実です。「嘘」が意図してつくものであるとすれば、作話は嘘ではないわけです。(・・・) 作話すること自体に問題はないのですが、それを聞いた人に「嘘をついた」と思われるために、周囲との関係性が悪くなるのが問題です。

(Confabulation is a 'lie' without intention to deceive, and it is a 'fact' to the speaker. If a lie is told with some intention, confabulation is not a lie. (...) Confabulation is not a problem by itself, but it may damage the relationship with others as a confabulator is regarded as a liar.)

(佐藤 2012:171 English translation is mine.)

Also in my data, we find a discourse in which M probably confabulates. In the following discourse, M (15073) explains that she does not have her camera at home because she left it when she went to her class reunion. Pointed out that the reunion was nearly one year ago, M (15081) explains again that it was not a reunion but a meeting to arrange the next reunion.

- 15073 M あたしクラス会のときに写真機持ってって (3s) うちにもないから [全然]  
atashi kurasu-kai no toki ni shashinki mottette (3s) uchinimo  
naikara [zenzen]  
(I took my camera to our reunion (3s) It is not at home at all.)  
(・・・)

- 15076 D うんクラス会はだって去年の5月だったからさあ  
un kurasu-kai wa datte kyonen no gogatsu datta kara saa  
(Well, but your reunion was in May last year, wasn't it?)

- 15077 M これからなんだけどね  
korekara nanda kedo ne  
(We are going to have it soon.)

- 15078 D うーん、いつあるの? クラス会  
uun, itsu aru no? kurasu-kai.



- (Well, when are you going to have it?)
- 15079 M クラス会? (17s) 4月の18日だけど、4月の18日  
 kurasu-kai? (17s) shi-gatsu no juu-hachinichi dakedo, shi-gatsu  
 no juu-hachinichi  
 (Our reunion? (17s) 18 April. It's on 18 April.)
- 15080 D ああそうなの?  
 aa soo na no?  
 (Oh, is it?)
- 15081 M で幹部だけこないだ集まったのよね  
 de kanbu dake konaida atsumatta no yo ne  
 (Then, only the main members for the arrangement got together  
 the other day.)

(17 March, 2012)

Some days later, M (15606) further explains that she left her camera in a camera shop for development and the shop will send it to her place. D first retorts that they do not do it because it costs much to them, but then concedes that M should wait and see (15609).

- 15606 M きっとそのカメラ屋さんがうちにも配達してくれると思うよ  
 kitto sono kameraya-san ga uchi nimo haitatsu shite kureru to omoo yo  
 (I'm sure that the camera shop will send it to my place.)
- 15607 D でもさあお客さんのカメラを全部カメラ屋さんが配達したらさあ採  
 算取れないよカメラ屋さん  
 demo saa okyaku-san no kamera o zenbu kameraya-san ga haitatsu  
 shitetara saa saisan torenai yo kameraya-san  
 (But if they send all the customers' camera to their home, it  
 won't pay, you know.)
- 15608 M そうねえ  
 soo nee  
 (I see.)
- 15609 D (笑) そうお金かかるんだもん配達するの、(・・・) だからさあちょっ  
 とあり得ないと思うんだけどでもまあそういうことならば少し待って  
 みたらどうかねえ  
 (laugh) soo okane kakaru-n-damon haitatsu suruno, (・・・)  
 dakarasaa chotto arienai to omou-n-dakedo demo maa sooyuu ko-  
 tonaraba sukoshi mattemitara dooka nee  
 ((laugh) Yes, cause it costs to send it (・・・) so I don't think

they do it. But if you say so, why don't you wait for a while?)

(21 March, 2012)

Five days later, as M (15706) repeats the same explanation, D (15707) points out that M had the camera just recently. Then, M (15708) simply admits it, and they agree that this matter is solved.

- 15706 M でカメラ屋さんに置いてきたのよね  
de kameraya-san ni oitekita no yo ne  
(Then I left it in a camera shop.)
- 15707 D おかあさんこないだカメラ持ってたじゃないうちに来たとき  
okaa-san konaida kamera motteta janai uchi ni kita toki  
(Just the other day, you had the camera when you came to my  
place, didn't you?)
- 15708 M うんあるから  
un aru kara  
(Yes, I have it.)
- ( . . . )
- 15717 D はいじゃあもうそれ解決ね  
hai jaa moo sore kaiketsu ne  
(Yeah, then it was solved, wasn't it?)
- 15718 M 解決  
kaiketsu  
(Solved.)

(26 March, 2012)

As we have seen, people with dementia sometimes infringe Maxim of Quality. They usually do not have any intention to deceive, but the other person tends to be puzzled or irritated by their 'lie'.

Grice's Maxims are bases for efficient communication. Yet, we should probably reconsider that transacting information is not the only purpose for talking. As Malinowski (1966: 315) points out, there is also 'a type of speech in which ties of union are created by a mere exchange of words'. Takenaka (2010: 75) reports that people with dementia sometimes have a friendly 'pseudo-dialog' in which they simply have a mono-log without understanding others. They may be trying to recover the ties of union they are losing.

As what people with dementia need, Kitwood (1997) raises 'attachment':

The loss of a primary attachment undermines the sense of security, and if several bonds are broken within a short time the effect can be devastating. There is every reason to suppose that the need for attachment remains when a person has dementia; indeed it may be as strong as in early childhood. Life is overshadowed by new uncertainties and anxieties, and some of the good memories from past secure attachments may be lost.

(Kitwood 1997: 82)

## 4. POLITENESS

This final section focuses on ‘dementia and politeness’, which is based on my observation that my mother sometimes deviated from ordinary politeness strategies when she was suffering from dementia. Taking Brown & Levinson (1987) and Leech (1983) (2014) as the main theoretical background, I would like to analyze the actual data I collected.

### 4.1 Brown & Levinson (1987)

To ‘make the most sense of the data’, Brown & Levinson (1987:58) assume ‘rational face-bearing agents’. At the same time, they take note of the difference between such a Model Person (MP) and actual humans.

However, there is intended no claim that ‘rational face-bearing agents’ are all or always what actual humans are, but simply that these are assumptions that make the most sense of the data, and are assumptions that all interacting humans know that they will be expected to orient to.

(Brown & Levinson 1987:58 my underlining)

In this model, MP tries to save each other’s face, and if s/he must do a face threatening act (FTA), s/he chooses a strategy: ‘bald on record’ ‘positive politeness’ ‘negative politeness’ ‘off record’ or ‘not doing FTA’. However, people with dementia could not judge what strategy is effective to save face of the other person and their own. As a result, they may say something too abrupt or too straight and can be considered impolite.

### 4.2 Leech (1983) (2014)<sup>7</sup>

Leech (1983: 81) formulates Politeness Principle as ‘Minimize (other things being equal) the expression of impolite beliefs’ and ‘Maximize (other things being equal) the

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7 For the analysis below, I also use Leech (2014), which explores and refines Leech (1983).

expression of polite beliefs’, and proposes some Maxims under the principle: Tact Maxim, Generosity Maxim, Approbation Maxim, Modesty Maxim, Agreement Maxim, and Sympathy Maxim. Considering the relation between the Politeness Principle and the Cooperative Principle by Grice (1975), Leech (1983) further mentions as follows:

The CP enables one participant in a conversation to communicate on the assumption that the other participant is being cooperative. In this the CP has the function of regulating what we say so that it contributes to some assumed illocutionary or discoursal goal(s). It could be argued, however, that the PP has a higher regulative role than this: to maintain the social equilibrium and the friendly relations which enable us to assume that our interlocutors are being cooperative in the first place. To put matters at their most basic: unless you are polite to your neighbour, the channel of communication between you will break down, and you will no longer be able to borrow his mower.

(Leech 1983: 82 my underlining)

For the people with dementia, it may be difficult to follow the Politeness Principle and to keep the channel of communication with others. As a result, they may have various difficulties in daily lives.

#### 4.3 Data

As the data for analysis, telephone conversations between the same participants from 1 April to 30 June 2012 are used. I also employ some face-to-face interactions in September 2013, because I think the other person’s face may be typically considered in face-to-face interactions.

**Table 5. Data**

<b>Recording Period</b>		1 April ~ 30 June, 2012 Recording dates were: 18 days in April, 27 days in May, and 25 days in June.	3 days in September, 2013
<b>Medium</b>		telephone	Face-to-face
<b>Place</b>		home	hospital
<b>Participants</b>	M: Mother	81years old	82 years old
	D: Daughter	58 years old	59 years old
	A: D’s friend		58 years old

#### 4.4 Points of Analysis

Based on Brown & Levinson (1987) and Leech (1983) (2014), I analyze the data from the points of ‘bald on record’, ‘Tact Maxim’ and ‘Opinion-Reticence Maxim’. Then, I further explore the data from the point of ‘consideration’.

##### 4.4.1 Bald on record

On ‘bald on record’, Brown & Levinson (1987) explain as follows:

Doing an act **baldly, without redress**, involves doing it in the most direct, clear, unambiguous and concise way possible (for example, for a request, saying ‘Do X!’). This we shall identify roughly with following the specifications of Grice’s Maxims of Cooperation (Grice 1967, 1975)

Brown & Levinson (1987: 69)

It should be noted, however, as Brown & Levinson (1987: 95) also mentions, ‘Indeed, the majority of natural conversations do not proceed in such a brusque fashion at all.’, we take some redressive actions in many cases.

Yet, people with dementia couldn’t take an appropriate politeness strategy in the situation, and tend to say things straight, which could be considered rude. My mother also had such a tendency: Seeing an elderly woman walking with a stick, she said ‘I don’t want to be like that’; Offered a seat in a train, she said angrily, ‘I don’t need it.’; Seeing her favorite pianist at a concert, she said surprisingly, ‘He has grown old!’.

We can also see the examples in the data. In the following interactions, M asks A (D’s friend), who visits her in hospital, about his weight.

- |     |   |   |
|-----|---|---|
| 175 | M | 何キロあるの？<br>nan-kiro aru no?<br>(How much do you weigh?)               |
| 176 | D | 何キロ (***)<br>nan-kiro (***)<br>(How much weight (***))                |
| 177 | A | (笑) 71 ぐらい<br>(laugh) nanajuu-ichi gurai<br>((laugh) about 71 kilos.) |
| 178 | M | すごいね<br>sugoi ne<br>(Great.)  |

(16 September, 2013)

The next example is also in hospital. Before M got dementia, she had always respected D's way of life and never asked D why she did not have a child. Since she got dementia, however, M asked D such a question several times. Therefore, when M (95) begins with 'It's a pity ...', D was easily able to predict the following discourse. It was quite surprising for D that M has changed and raises this issue so straight.

- 95 M いや、ひとつ残念だったのは、典子がなんでね  
iya, hitotsu zannen datta no wa, noriko ga nande ne  
(Well, it's a pity why you didn't...)
- 96 D うん、子ども産まなかったかって？  
un, kodomo umanakatta katte?  
(Um, why I didn't have a child?)
- 97 M 産まなかったのかなと思ってね本当に  
umanakatta no kana to omotte ne hontoo ni  
(I really wonder why you didn't have a child.)
- 98 D うんごめんね (笑)  
un gomen ne (laugh)  
(Well, I'm sorry. (laugh))

(17 September, 2013)

#### 4.4.2 Infringement of Tact Maxim

Leech (1983: 132) explains on Tact Maxim that 'Minimize cost to *other*. Maximize benefit to *other*.' When we make a request which is costly to the other person, we take some redressive action to minimize the cost. On the other hand, when we offer something which is beneficial to the other person, we do it straight: e.g. 'Have another sandwich' (ibid.: 107).

However, people with dementia tend to infringe this maxim and to make a request in an impolite or abrupt manner. When M visited D's flat, she sometimes said 'I want this', pointing at a small doll, for instance. Being accepted her request, she looked very pleased like a child and put her 'treasure' into her bag.

We can see the example of infringing Tact Maxim also in the data. M abruptly changes the topic from her school reunion to 'kabuki', a traditional Japanese drama, and expresses her wish to see the performance. She first uses an utterance to minimize the cost of D: 'I'm sorry to say this, but...' (142). Then, she expresses her wish more strongly: 'Please think about it' (144). Finally, she makes the utmost request: 'If I go, I would like to have the best seat' (150).

- 142 M 悪いけどね、歌舞伎に1回行きたいんだ  
 waruikedo ne, kabuki ni ikkai ikitai-n-da  
 (I'm sorry to say this, but I would like to go to kabuki once.)
- 143 D あ、そうなの、歌舞伎に歌舞伎座新しくなったからね、うん  
 a, soo na no, abuki ni kabuki-za atarashiku natta kara ne, un  
 (Oh, would you? Cause Kabuki Theatre was renovated, wasn't it?  
 I see.)
- 144 M お願いだから考えといてちょうだい  
 onegai dakara kangaetoite choodai  
 (Please think about it.)  
 (・・・)
- 149 D そうなんだ、意欲があっていいじゃん、お母さん(笑)  
 soo nanda, iyoku ga ate iijan, okaasan (laugh)  
 (I see. I think it's very good you are so positive. (laugh))
- 150 M (笑) どうせなら、私、一番いい席に  
 (laugh) doose nara, watashi, ichiban ii seki ni  
 ((laugh) If I go, I would like to have the best seat.)

(17 September, 2013)

#### 4.4.3 Infringement of Opinion-Reticence Maxim

Reformulate the maxims of politeness in Leech (1983), Leech (2014) suggests the General Strategy of Politeness (GSP), and as one of the component maxims, he proposes 'opinion reticence maxim': Give a low value to S's opinions (Leech 2014: 91, 97). Referring to Japanese society, he explains as follows:

(・・・) people frequently soften the force of their own opinions, (・・・) there is a low tolerance of opinionated behavior, where people express themselves forcefully, as if their opinions matter more than others'. Expressing an opinion in Japanese society may be seen as potentially offensive, especially to superiors, in that an opinion may imply a criticism.

(Leech 2014: 97)

Before M had dementia, she had basically followed the norm of Japanese society and never been opinionated. Since she had dementia, however, she often persisted in her own opinion.

An example is seen in the following discourse. Since D gave her a camera, M has enjoyed taking photos. She took the camera to her school reunion, and she found nobody had

a camera there. Since then, by letter and telephone, she tried to persuade her old friends to buy a camera. She infringed not only Opinion-Reticence Maxim but also one of the ‘Rules of Politeness’, which Lakoff (1973: 298) proposes: Don’t impose. Probably her persistency perplexed her friends, and damaged her relationship with them. Her utterance ‘I’ll never go 【to the reunion】 ’ (16437) tells us that she wasn’t able to communicate with her old friends well.

- 16361 M だ一れも持ってこないんだもん  
daaremo motte konai-n-damon  
(Nobody brought a camera.)  
( . . . )
- 16437 M [ もう二度と ] 行こうと思わない  
[moo nido to] ikoo to omowanai  
(I’ll never go 【to the reunion】 .)  
( . . . )
- 16497 M あたし〇〇ちゃんあんなに手紙出したのにまだ買ってないのつつた  
ら、あたしは買いたくありませんなんつつてんのよ  
atashi 〇〇chan annani tegami dashitanoni mada kattenai nott-  
suttara, atashi wa kaitaku arimasen nantsutten no yo  
(I said to 〇〇, ‘I sent you so many letters. Why didn’t you  
buy a camera?’ and she said to me, ‘I don’t want to buy one’,  
you know.)

(18 April, 2012)

- 16836 M ( . . . ) 買いなさいって電話したんだけど  
( . . . ) kainasaitte dennwa shita-n-dakedo  
(( . . . ) I phoned and told her to buy 【a camera】 .)
- 16837 D 買いなさいって人にあの一強制はできないものだって  
kainasaitte hito ni anoo kyoosee wa dekinai mono datte  
(Um you can’t force her to buy, can you?)

(23 April, 2012)

#### 4.4.4 Consideration

While M infringed various politeness maxims as discussed above, she showed some consideration for face of the other person, herself, and even the third person.

##### 4.4.4.1 consideration for face of the other person and herself

When M was hospitalized with aspiration pneumonia, D visited her in the hospital



with her friend A. In the following discourse, when they are leaving, M apologizes to A: ‘I’m sorry I didn’t serve tea or anything’ (685). It is impossible for M, who is bedridden, to serve tea and her utterance is rather funny in the situation, but she probably wanted to show some consideration for D’s friend as her mother.

- 685 M 何もお茶も出さないで、すいません  
 nani mo ocha mo dasanai de, suimasen  
 (I’m sorry I didn’t serve tea or anything.)
- 686 D (笑) お茶も出さない  
 (laugh) ocha mo dasamai  
 ((laugh) You didn’t serve tea or anything.)
- 687 A いやいや、もうこっちこそ、そんな  
 iya iya, moo kocchi koso, sonna  
 (Oh, don’t mention such a thing!)
- 688 D お茶を、この状態で出してもらおうとは思わないから大丈夫だよ  
 ocha o, kono joutai de dashite moraoo to wa omowanai kara  
 daijoobu da yo  
 (Don’t worry. Nobody expects you to serve tea in this condition.)

(16 September, 2013)

M’s consideration for the other person may be related to the face of her own. When M was recovering, D looked for a nursing home where M could stay. Although D thought that M might wish to stay in her own house with D, it was difficult for D to handle both working and caring for M.

In the next discourse, M (402) first implies her wish to live with D. Yet, when D (403) explains the difficulty, M (404) abruptly changes the subject. By evading the previous topic, M might have tried to save the face of D and herself.

- 400 M いつ帰れるの、その  
 itsu kaereru no, sono  
 (When can I go back?)
- 401 D うん、あとね 1 週間ぐらい  
 un, ato ne isshuukan gurai  
 (Um, in a week or so, I guess.)
- 402 M あ、良かった、典子も一緒に住むの？あたしと  
 a yokatta, noriko mo issho ni sumu no? atashi to

- (Oh, that's fine. Are you living with me then?)
- 403 D あー、あたし働いてるからね、それは難しいかもしれない、だから、やっぱりお母さんに、どこかに居てもらうことになるかもしれない、ごめんね、ねー、でも私、できるだけ行くからさ、ね、ごめんね、本当にね、お母さんの、一番したいようにしてあげられなくて
- aa, atashi hataraiteru kara ne, sore wa muzukashii kamo shin-nai, dakara, yappari okaasan ni dokoka ni ite morau koto ni naru kamo shinnai, gomen ne, nee, demo watashi, dekirudake iku-kara sa, ne, gomen ne, hontoo ni ne, okaasan no, ichiban shitai yoo ni shite agerarenakute
- (Well, as I am working, it may be difficult. Then, probably I will ask you to stay somewhere. I'm sorry, but I will visit you as much as possible, you know. I'm very sorry I can't let you do as you like most.)
- 404 M ま、一番の楽しみは今度クラス会があったら行こうかと思ってるけど
- ma, ichiban no tanoshimi wa kondo kurasukai ga attara ikookato omotteru kedo
- (Well, my best wish is going to the school reunion next time.)

(15 September, 2013)

#### 4.4.4.2 consideration for face of the third person

On the other hand, M showed interest in the nursing home she was going to enter. Hoping to make new friends there, M also considers how to keep an appropriate distance or 'negative politeness': 'not good to get too close to anyone' (1649).

- 1643 M 本当に独りぼっちだと寂しいよ
- hontoo ni hitoribocchi dato sabishii yo
- (I will feel very lonely if I am alone.)
- 1644 D そうだよね うん
- soo da yo ne un
- (Yes, I know how you feel.)
- 1645 M うん だから、よく観察してさ、この人なら・・・
- un dakara, yooku kansatsu shite sa, kono hito nara...
- (So I will see the people there very carefully, and if I find a good person...)
- 1646 D うん そうね
- un soo ne

- (Yeah, that will be fine.)
- 1647 M いろんな昔のことをね、しゃべってもいいやと思う人  
ironna mukashi no koto o ne, shabette mo ii ya to omoo hito  
(Someone I would like to talk with, about various stories in the past.)
- 1648 D うん  
un  
(I see.)
- 1649 M やたらと接近しても悪いから、よく考えて、典子にも来てもらったときに  
yatara to sekkin shitemo warui kara, yoku kangaete, noriko ni  
mo kitemoratta toki ni  
(As it's not good to get too close to anyone, I'll think it carefully, and when you visit me...)

(22 September, 2013)

M also considered how to create a good relationship with the staff of the nursing home. In the next discourse, M considers the convenience of the staff and concludes that it is better to have the staff do their work, rather than to give them ‘an unnecessary hand’ (2089).

- 2083 M で、そういう所の部屋は掃除してくれるの？  
de, sooyuu tokoro no heya wa sooji o shite kureru no?  
(Then, do they clean the room for me?)
- 2084 D してくれる  
shite kureru  
(Yes, they do.)
- 2085 M 悪いね  
warui ne  
(I would feel sorry for that.)
- 2086 D (笑) だって、それも、それちゃんと付いている  
(laugh) datte, sore mo, sore mo chanto tsuiteiru  
((laugh) But it is included, you know.)
- 2087 M あ、そう  
a, soo  
(Oh, I see.)
- 2088 D うん、大丈夫だよ  
un, daijoubu da yo  
(Yeah, don't worry.)

- 2089 M 下手に手伝ったりしないほうがいいね  
heta ni tetsudattari shinai hoo ga ii ne  
(I shouldn't give them an unnecessary hand, should I?)  
(22 September, 2013)

Yet, she was reluctant to have the staff wash her dirty clothes. When D was a small child, M told her not to have anyone wash her underwear but to wash it by herself. Even with dementia, M still had such values firmly. In the next discourse, M asks D if she should wash the soiled part before the staff wash her clothes (961).

- 959 M うん それで、あの、洗濯やってくれるって言うけど  
un sore de, ano, sentaku yatte kurerutte yuu kedo  
(You told me they will wash my clothes, but...)
- 960 D うん  
un  
(Yes.)
- 961 M その汚れたまんま出してもいいものかね、つまみ洗いぐらい  
sono yogoreta manma dashitemo ii mono ka ne, tsumami aria gurai  
(Can I have them wash my dirty clothes? Or should I wash the  
soiled part before that?)
- 962 D (笑)  
( laugh)  
(( laugh))
- 963 M (笑)  
( laugh)  
(( laugh))
- 964 D すごい、やっぱりお母さん、あの  
sugoi, yappari okaasan, ano  
(Great! You are certainly...)
- 965 M でも、どっちがいいかな  
demo, docchi ga ii ka na  
(But which would it better?)
- 966 D 昭和の女だね あ、そんなつまみ洗いなんかしないほうが、かえって  
shoowa no onna da ne a, sonna tsumami aria nanka shinai hooga,  
kaette iinjanai?  
(A woman in the Showa era you are. It's better not to wash the

soiled part, I guess.)

(23 September, 2013)

As we have seen above, people with dementia sometimes infringe politeness maxims and they may be considered childish, selfish or rude. However, if we carefully see their discourse, we realize that they often consider the feelings of others.

## CONCLUSION

I have examined my data from three points of view: a speech act of ‘thanking’, Grice’s Maxim of Quality and Politeness. The results of each point and their implications are summarized as follows:

### 1) a speech act of ‘thanking’

M uses thanking expressions much more than D, and M’s expressions tend to be more formal and intensified. These results may reflect their roles: D a support-giver / M a support-receiver. However, M sometimes tries to change the roles. Although her offer is not always accepted, M wishes to help D in some way.

As the result shows, people with dementia may wish that they could play more roles in relationships with others. To create a better relationship, we should be more aware of their wish.

### 2) Grice’s Maxim of Quality

Without any intention to deceive, M sometimes infringe Maxim of Quality; that is, M’s utterances seem to be based on ‘delusion’ ‘confusion’ or ‘confabulation’. D tries to persuade M of the falsehood, but M does not always believe D. M sometimes insists or makes up another story, which may result from her self-defense.

The result reminds us that we use language not only to transmit some information but also to maintain relationships. Focusing on the latter, we should not insist on the correctness too much in the utterances of people with dementia.

### 3) Politeness

M sometimes does not follow Politeness Principle, which is usually presupposed in communication. For example, M says things too straight (bald on record), makes a request too directly (infringement of Tact Maxim) or gives her opinion too insistently (Infringement of Opinion-Reticence Maxim).

On the other hand, M often shows consideration for others.

The result tells us that people with dementia may consider for others even when they look rather impolite from our point of view. We should notice that they

try to show their consideration in their own ways which might be different from ours.

These results show that people with dementia are likely to have difficulties in communication. Yet, they also suggest that people with dementia are asking for a relationship with others in their own way. I hope my small research will be of some help for carers and researchers to understand their wishes.

### TRANSCRIPTIOPN CONVENTIONS (in Japanese excerpts)

M, D, A = speaker identification

、 = parceling of talk; breathing time

? = rising tone

— = prolonged sound

[ = start of overlapping speech

] = end of overlapping speech

( \* ) = the speaker's contribution is indistinct

(laugh) = non-verbal contribution

( s ) = approximate seconds of the pause

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